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Environment Department Grants \$50,000 to Help Santa Fe Meet Water Needs

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department's (NMED) today announced the completion of a \$50,000 grant agreement with the City of Santa Fe to help with the environmental analysis and design of a system to divert water from the Rio Grande. The grant was appropriated to NMED by the state legislature from the Severance Tax Bond fund.

"The Buckman Diversion Project has the ability to give the people of Santa Fe a vital new source of water," said Environment Secretary Ron Curry. "By tapping into its existing rights to this water, the city will be able to continue to serve its citizens and enjoy economic growth. As a former City Manager of Santa Fe, I know how much this means for Santa Fe's future. I am proud that the Environment Department is helping to make this happen for the growing community of Santa Fe."

The proposed system would divert water from the east bank of the Rio Grande near the Buckman well field. Its infrastructure would consist of an intake structure, a sediment removal facility, five booster stations, two water treatment plants and the pipelines necessary to convey water between these components. It is slated to be functioning by late 2006 or 2007.

"The drought has hit Northern New Mexico especially hard," said Secretary Curry. "Through this grant, the Environment Department is helping make sure that Santa Fe's taps keep flowing with water that is clean and safe to drink. In a drought, water quality is every bit as important as water quantity."

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